

Legislation Text

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Authorizing the Committees on Commerce and Economic Development and Public Health and Human Services to conduct a joint hearing to review the past and current guidance for Restaurant Capacity; and, if needed, make recommendations to the Philadelphia Health Department to either change current Restaurant capacity requirements or recommend future Restaurant capacity requirements.

WHEREAS, Due to recent shutdowns, 89 percent of restaurants have had to lay additional staff off, and 62 percent continue to operate more than 20 percent below current staffing levels; and

WHEREAS, A survey of restaurant and bar owners in Pennsylvania showed that only 13 percent expect their sales volume to improve in the coming weeks; and

WHEREAS, The unemployment rate in this sector increased to 28.44 percent compared to 19.8 percent nationwide; and

WHEREAS, Over 50 Philadelphia restaurants have closed since March 2020; and

WHEREAS, On October 2, 2020, the Philadelphia Health Department allowed indoor dining for Restaurants to go to 50 percent capacity with no additional HVAC standards; and

WHEREAS, On November 20, 2020 until January 15, 2021, the Philadelphia Health Department banned all indoor dining in the City of Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, In January 2021, the Philadelphia Department of Health created a restaurant advisory group to assist in further reopening guidance for restaurants; and

WHEREAS, On January 16, 2021, the Philadelphia Health Department revised its guidance, allowing for indoor dining to occur at 25 percent of the stated Fire Code Occupancy, with added conditions at the expense of the owner; and

WHEREAS, On February 11, 2021, the Philadelphia Health Department said that restaurants could go to 50 percent capacity if they had the required ventilation. Those restaurants who did not meet these ventilation requirements had to stay at the 25 percent capacity, against the advice of the restaurant advisory committee; and

WHEREAS, The stated ventilation standards in Philadelphia are not required anywhere else in the country and may come at an increased expense for restaurants to be compliant; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That it hereby authorizes the Committees on Commerce and Economic Development and Public Health and Human Services to conduct a joint hearing to review the past and current guidance for Restaurant Capacity; and, if needed, make recommendations to the Philadelphia Health Department to either change current Restaurant capacity requirements or recommend future Restaurant capacity requirements.

